

48 Individuals and 13 Groups Will Receive Governor's Outstanding Volunteer Awards in Virtual Ceremony Jan. 17

NEW CASTLE (Dec. 22, 2021) Forty-eight individuals and 13 groups will be honored with the 2021 Governor's Outstanding Volunteer Award during a virtual ceremony to be held at 7 p.m. Jan. 17, 2022. The recipients will be recognized for significant contributions, engagement and impact in diverse service activities.

Throughout the month of December, staff members from the State Office of Volunteerism have been working with nominators to surprise honorees with the news of their selection. A "SurPRIZE Patrol" has delivered custom cakes and small gifts to honorees as they continue to serve their communities. The names of all recipients will be announced during a Facebook Live presentation on the Volunteer Delaware Facebook page at 7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 23.

"I salute these worthy recipients and all those who volunteered their time and energy this year to help improve the health and well-being of their neighbors in need," said Governor John Carney. "The coronavirus pandemic has brought special challenges for many of our residents in 2021, which is why I am doubly grateful for the generosity and selfless commitment of these volunteers."

The Governor's Outstanding Volunteer Service Awards, administered by the State Office of Volunteerism, honors the contributions of individuals and groups in Delaware that have made a positive impact in their communities or across the state through service and volunteering.

“We are honored to be able to celebrate the exceptional service of so many deserving Delawareans,” said Kanani H. Munford, Senior Administrator for the State Office of Volunteerism and the Executive Director of the Governor’s Commission on Community and Volunteer Service. “With a combined total of nearly 200,000 hours of service in 2021, and representing an economic impact of over \$5.6 million, these individuals and groups represent the largest and one of the most diverse groups of honorees we have ever had the privilege to recognize in a single year.”

The Governor’s Outstanding Volunteer Service Awards are sponsored by the Office of the Governor, the Department of Health and Social Services, Division of State Service Centers, the State Office of Volunteerism, as well as the Governor’s Commission on Community and Volunteer Service.

The recipients of the 2020 Governor’s Outstanding Volunteer Service Award are:

Paul Wilkinson Lifetime Achievement Award

Charles Michel (Sussex County)

- Charles Michel volunteers his time with numerous causes, but his primary focus is related to veterans. Charles has served with the Seaford American Legion for more than 20 years. He has been a post commander and a district commander, organized the annual Memorial Day service, oversees a medical supply lending closet and most recently became the state chair for the annual Boy’s State program. The part of his service that means the most to him though, is when he volunteers to play taps for veteran funerals. A veteran himself, Charles has dedicated his life to making sure that other veterans get the services and support they need.

Volunteer Leadership

Christina Haynes (Sussex County)

- Christina channeled the grief from the loss of her son into

the creation of the 4Troy Foundation, which was established in January 2020 to bring awareness to RMC (Renal Medullary Carcinoma), to assist families that are navigating their fight with RMC for treatment, as well as housing. And also building a youth mentoring program to help student athletes throughout Sussex County with their academic work, athletic training, scholarship writing, college application completions and life skills building.

Vic Parker (New Castle County)

- Vic Parker is one of American Red Cross' Leadership Volunteers for the Delmarva Chapter and has traveled in support of the organization's humanitarian efforts in response to disasters. Vic is a national leader in sheltering and has had several occasions where she was requested to manage large shelters for high-impact disasters. Vic has served as a Disaster Action Team runner where she delivers Client Assistance Materials during the pandemic, a position held by only a few to keep minimal staff in the field when able. This past year, Vic organized a large blood drive and continually steps up to make sure that individuals affected by disasters get the help they need as soon as possible.

Carol Lucas (Kent County)

- Carol is a Lead Canteen volunteer and manages volunteer schedules, training, communication, connections, and interaction at her local Blood Bank of Delmarva Center in Dover. The Blood Bank of Delmarva relies on Carol to keep the volunteers in the refreshment area trained, scheduled, and pleasant to keep the blood donors happy and wanting to return to give blood again.

Nikki Gonzalez (Sussex County)

- Nikki serves as an advocate for individuals experiencing homelessness in Sussex County. Answering hotline phone calls at all hours of the day and night, Nikki works to make sure that individuals experiencing homelessness have their needs met. She coordinates volunteers, meals, and needs for items

like shoes, socks and camping gear, and she does it all with a passion for service that is admirable to everyone she meets. Beyond her work to battle homelessness, Nikki serves on the boards for several organizations working to advocate for and support people battling addiction.

Martin Brett (New Castle County)

- As Vice Chair for the DEVOAD (Delaware Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster) and Field Lead for our Hurricane Ida Flooding Response, Marty Brett worked closely with team leaders during volunteer work days to identify and structure the work to be done, as well as to guide the teams through any changes or decisions necessary in work to be performed. For three weeks, Marty was on scene every day to coordinate response activity for numerous organizations and his leadership enabled the VOAD to provide timely and effective services to the citizens of Wilmington in their time of need.

Elaine Mundy (Kent County)

- One of only two volunteers to return to the Hope Medical Dental Clinic after pandemic restrictions lifted, Elaine Mundy worked to eliminate the waiting list for treatment by creating a new and more efficient scheduling system. Because of Elaine, and for the first time since the addition of dental services to the clinic, no callers have been turned away due to the long waiting lists, and services specific to women are now being offered. Without Elaine's leadership, the clinic simply could not help the number of people that it does.

Sarah Grady (Sussex County)

- As a dedicated volunteer with the Joshua M. Freeman Foundation, Sarah Grady was asked to lead the dozens of volunteers who committed to assembling more than 22,000 art kits for students in Sussex County schools. In this role, Sarah coordinates the complex logistics of the intake of supplies in addition to developing and executing the timeline that the organization committed to for delivering the kits to

local schools. Her leadership and dedication enabled this program to deliver vital arts enrichment supplies to thousands of local children.

Andrew Zampini (Sussex County)

- As the president of the Board of Directors for the Lewes Senior Activity Center, Andrew spearheaded the push for a new building and renovation of existing facilities for local seniors to gather and participate in social, recreational, educational, cultural and health-related programming, as well as accessing services and activities. The \$1.8 million expansion of facilities was made possible, in large part, through Andrew's leadership.

Don Connell (Sussex County)

- The Toy Project is an annual volunteer effort of the Mason/Dixon Woodworkers and is overseen by Don Connell. Each year, more than 1,000 toys are hand-made by volunteers to be distributed to children in need. Don spends countless hours each year making sure that volunteers can make the maximum impact through their handcrafted toys. Through his leadership, the program has grown and flourished, and we expect to be able to continue making toys for children for years to come.

Donna Murawski (Sussex County)

- In the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, Donna Murawski found a way to keep the Milton Community Food Pantry operating and set up the service for long-term success by identifying a building the pantry could purchase. Her unwavering support to keep the pantry open at personal sacrifice to her own family life has helped the family lives of countless others. Donna has made the battle against food insecurity in her area a personal priority and served more than 2,000 hours last year.

Jessica Gainer (Sussex County)

- Jessica Gainer is the Executive Director of Project SparkleOn (PSO), an outreach program for children in Sussex County. Under Jessica's leadership, Project SparkleOn develops

projects to involve youth in kindness and community service activities. Jessica teaches young people to make an impact, combat bullying, work with others and develop a positive self-image. Her goal is to make sure every young person feels capable of changing the world.

Paige Howell (Kent County)

- Paige Howell has a developmental disability and faces her own challenges by spreading kindness to others. She and her family take tough days and use them as inspiration to get up and do something for someone else. Through her initiative, Paige's Kindness Project, Paige meets any need that she sees – from helping a single mom pay for her daughter's music lessons, to delivering small gifts to first responders and community members. She drops off snacks and water each month to the local homeless shelter, decorated rocks for Milford police officers, prepared treat bags for seniors in her apartment complex, and has made more than 1,100 cards for others with disabilities who live in group homes across the state.

Lauren Berry (New Castle County)

- Serving as the Camp Volunteer Director for the Down Syndrome Association of Delaware, Lauren Berry has enabled hundreds of children to attend summer camp. Lauren is a leader with a strong background in working with children and brings knowledge through her experience as a special education teacher. Lauren is always willing to lend a hand, sets an example for other volunteers, and steps in to take leadership positions.

Individual Volunteer

Vivian Montana Goodman (Sussex County)

- Vivian supports multiple nonprofits in achieving their missions. She cooks meals for the Shepherd's Office in Georgetown, raises money for the Alzheimer's Association through a community dinner, and works with Lasagna Love to

cook meals for anyone in need. Vivian also serves as a purchasing agent for a project that serves Delaware foster children, making sure that resources are stretched to provide pajamas and journals for children living in the foster care system.

Ed Scarborough (Sussex County)

- Ed Scarborough is a longtime volunteer who is always looking for a way to help. An avid volunteer throughout his life, Ed became an active volunteer with the American Red Cross of the National Capital & Greater Chesapeake Region in 2016. There have been years when Ed is deployed to help victims of disaster across North America more days than he is at home. During his travels, you will always see Ed with his sidekick Eddie the Red Cross Teddie, and the pair bring smiles everywhere they go. When COVID-19 struck in the spring of 2020, Ed had to take a break from deploying, but he didn't let the pandemic sideline him from helping. Ed began working to ensure that his neighbors had plenty to eat and made regular visits to the various food pantries to pick up food that he could deliver to those in need.

Joe Principe (New Castle County)

- Joe Principe is a volunteer with Autism Delaware who can be counted on to do anything and everything needed to support families, like his, who are living with the impact of an autism spectrum disorder. Joe works every event, offers his shop for storage, finds sponsors to provide pizza for parties and events, brings a large team to the walks and helps with the events surrounding the spring race at Dover International Speedway. Joe's consistent support helps Autism Delaware continue to offer a large range of services to families in Delaware who are living with autism.

John Brady (Sussex County)

- John Brady has been serving as a part of the Boy Scouts of America since he was a child. Growing up with a scout leader father, John learned what it meant to live a life of service,

and he has taken that lesson to heart. Other council volunteers have only wonderful things to say about John and his dedication to scouting. He goes to every scouting camp in the area, tries to be at every Court of Honor possible, and serves as a tremendous resource for scout leaders across the state. Because of his work, the scouting program grew in Sussex County to involve more youth and leaders while increasing financial support for scouting.

Shelli Smith

- In her time with CASA (Court-Appointed Special Advocates) Delaware, Shelli Smith has accepted multiple challenging teen cases. As a CASA, Shelli works with young people who need a Court-Appointed Special Advocate. These situations are always challenging and require a dedicated individual who can build relationships and advocate for the young people involved. Her clients are spread across hundreds of miles, and some have required specialized care in out-of-state placements. Shelli manages to forge strong working relationships with everyone on the team that serves each of the young people, and her work has made a tremendous impact on the lives of each of her clients.

Dianne Shearon (Sussex County)

- Dianne Shearon's thousands of hours served at the Community Resource Center of Rehoboth Beach have enabled its Food Rescue program to fight the growing problem of food insecurity. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, needs have increased dramatically in the community, and Dianne's commitment to managing both the volunteer and donor side of the operation and the distribution. Plus, she makes sure that people's needs are met as quickly as possible. Without her leadership, the resource center would not have been able to grow the way it has.

Babita Jagnanan (New Castle County)

- Babita Jagnanan donates clothing, household items and food to individuals, families and organizations in need in

Delaware, through one-on-one distribution or via community giveaway events. The donations are largely through her family charity, Forget Me Not Families, or through partnerships. Through Babita's service, she can help remove the stresses of acquiring needed basic belongings, personal care products, and food for those who are struggling. During the pandemic, she has volunteered at multiple vaccination clinics, helping to organize, directing traffic, even securing an RN to provide shots when there was a shortage. She also organizes holiday meals for the homeless and anyone else who might not have family as a resource for those uncertain times.

William "Chick" Glenden (Kent County)

- William "Chick" Glenden has been a volunteer EMT in Delaware for the past 30 years, continuing to provide coverage at least one night a week. Even while undergoing treatment for cancer and during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Chick continued working to ensure that the Frederica Volunteer Fire Department's ambulance was always available when there was a need. Chick also serves as a volunteer Mayor for the town of Frederica and oversaw the addition of a new park to the town.

Ellen Muentner (New Castle County)

- Ellen works to support several area nonprofits, including the Brandywine Zoo, the Natural History Museum and the Friends of the Wilmington Parks. Her fundraising efforts help support operations at all three organizations. Her contribution to the Friends of the Wilmington Parks has grown the volunteer program to ensure that the Jasper Crane Rose Garden is tended year-round and especially during the growing season. Working at the Brandywine Zoo, Ellen reads to children who are visiting, and at the Delaware Natural History Museum, Ellen feeds and cares for animals.

Stephanie Jaynes (New Castle County)

- As a volunteer with the Chesapeake Bay Girl Scout Council for the past 15 years, Stephanie Jaynes has served in many ways, including as the leader of Troop 537 and as the cookie

mom for many years. Her service has inspired and encouraged numerous young women, including those she has mentored through their Bronze, Silver and Gold Award projects. Stephanie also serves as a mentor to new troop leaders, helping them with program ideas, supplies/material, encouragement, and assistance with difficult situations.

Ennio Zaragoza (Kent County)

- Ennio Zaragoza spends thousands of hours each year working with Code Purple of Kent County. Through his work, Ennio has addressed food insecurity in the Dover area, helps those recovering from addiction, and supports individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Ennio also works with individuals who are exiting incarceration, helping with reentry and providing resources. Because of the dedication Ennio exhibits, Code Purple of Kent County has been able to expand its mission capacity to meet growing needs.

Pam Salaam (New Castle County)

- Pam Salaam is not a member of any organization, but goes out on her own to collect and prepare food to serve individuals and families experiencing homelessness in New Castle County. Pam visits parks throughout the county and meets with individuals to make sure that their needs for food and basic supplies are met, even using her own resources to purchase needed items. Her meals always include fruits, vegetables, meat and dessert, and are prepared and served fresh each day.

Mary Kendall (Sussex County)

- Mary Kendall is a devoted volunteer with the Joshua M. Freeman Foundation (JMFF). This past January, the JMFF embarked on an ambitious program to supply Creative Art Nourishment Kits for children in the Sussex County schools, as well as students who use the Food Bank of Delaware backpack program in Kent and Sussex counties. Mary registered herself to volunteer for every morning and afternoon shift offered. This was an 8-hour daily commitment for several weeks at a time. Mary also took it upon herself to gather hundreds of

empty boxes from local stores so that kits could be assembled and packed in a timely manner. Mary was instrumental in making sure that the JMFF was able to deliver Creative Nourishment Kits to local school children.

Dianne Nichols (New Castle County)

- Dianne Nichols works with Literacy Delaware to help adults in Delaware with low literacy or English language skills. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, as in-person sessions ceased and alternate methods had to be found, Dianne took the lead in finding online programs that would allow Literacy Delaware to continue delivering on its mission. Once a solution was found, Dianne conducted training workshops for volunteer tutors to help them learn how to use this important tool. Now, Dianne continues as the lead for the IXL program, tracking hours and scores for all those involved. Dianne is also spearheading a multi-part professional development project for tutors.

Richard Carver (New Castle County)

- Richard Carver's knowledge of technology enabled him to facilitate Literacy Delaware's transition to a virtual instruction model, allowing the adult English Language Learners to continue their studies even as the COVID-19 pandemic shut down in-person classes. The monumental undertaking of pivoting the entire operation to online learning could not have occurred without the expertise of volunteer tutor and now "resident" IT guru Richard Carver. Rich conducted numerous workshops on how to use remote platforms and shared tutoring and remote teaching ideas to inform and engage tutors. He developed a tutor resource intranet, which contains links to helpful websites with resources for online teaching and continues to conduct mentoring sessions for new volunteers during tutor training, as well as offering one-on-one tech assistance whenever necessary.

Ruth Pryor (Sussex County)

- An avid volunteer, Ruth Pryor serves as a volunteer and as

the Treasurer at the Cape Henlopen Food Basket, as a “shoe shopper” for Clothing Our Kids, as a community educator and facilitator for an Alzheimer’s Association Caregiver Support Group, and sings in the St. Edmund Catholic Church choir. In addition to all of these service activities, Ruth serves on the Board for Lunch with a Purpose. Her work has helped to ease the impact of food insecurity, helps those struggling with an Alzheimer’s diagnosis and supports dozens of local nonprofit groups through fundraising activities.

Sophie Philips (New Castle County)

- As Miss Delaware 2021, Sophie Philips committed to a year of full-time volunteer service to the people of Delaware. For 9/11 Day this year, Sophie led a team of volunteers to build a pollinator and vegetable garden in the Southbridge neighborhood in Wilmington. Sophie worked with a local garden center to carefully choose plants that are native to this area and then worked with a team of volunteers to bring everything to the site. Once there, Sophie taught the volunteers (including local children) how to prepare the soil, do the planting and care for the plants as they grow. Their goal is to have a vegetable garden that can feed local families while supporting local pollinators.

Roxanne Ferguson (New Castle County)

- Roxanne Ferguson is a lifelong volunteer who has worked with Rotary International for more than 15 years, serving in leadership and working with a variety of causes and projects. Roxanne has volunteered with Stockings for Soldiers, Girl Scouts of the Chesapeake Bay, the New Castle Chamber of Commerce, the American Cancer Society and as a skilled volunteer with the Middletown-Odessa-Townsend soccer program. Additionally, she is currently serving with the Jean Birch Senior Center, where she helps support the MOT Senior Communities. Roxanne’s commitment to service led her to a position as Co-Host of the Pathways to Service Rotary Radio Show, where she discusses important topics relevant to the

community and informs the community about projects and services.

Harry Brake (Sussex County)

- Harry Brake is a constant volunteer. Harry is primarily involved with the Nanticoke River Watershed Conservancy, but he is always looking for a way to incorporate service into his life and the lives of his students. He leads the way in both maintaining and improving the Chapel Branch Nature Trails and engages students who use the trails for their cross-country team to give back by doing maintenance tasks and planning improvements. Harry also works with local birding enthusiasts to help build birding and bat habitats in the area. This past year, Harry also worked on building a permanent 9/11 exhibit at the Woodbridge High School by getting students involved in recording interviews with survivors and creating a gallery walk of information for young people to be able to better understand the events of that day.

Ron Russell (Sussex County)

- Ron Russell, also known as “the birdman,” is a member of the Nanticoke River Watershed Conservancy board. He has not only achieved the installation of 16 bird boxes at the Chapel Branch Trail at Woodland Road, but also has been successful in having 38 birds that have fledged. When a bird fledges, it has enough strength in its wings to fly. Ron also has committed himself to cleaning up the busy stretch of public road along the edge of the nature area, ensuring that visitors and wildlife have a clean space. Ron’s work with the Nanticoke River Watershed Conservancy has enhanced its reach and his knowledge of birds has been a tremendous asset to rebuilding native bird populations in Western Sussex County.

Ted Mariner (Sussex County)

- Ted Mariner serves in many different roles at the Nanticoke Senior center including as a bus driver, delivering homebound meals, and hosting Veterans Day and Memorial Day events. Ted is always willing to give a hand when something is needed.

Also a volunteer with VFW Post 4961, Ted is a veteran who uses his time to support other veterans and their families to feel remembered and respected.

Hadiyah Gissendanner (New Castle County)

- Hadiyah Gissendanner served as a Resident Educator at the tuition-free Catholic boys' school, Nativity Preparatory School. During her time there, Hadiyah developed such incredible relationships with the administration, parents, and students, that she was hired into a new role that was created to match her skillset and further the mission of the school. At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Hadiyah helped the school navigate first to virtual, then to hybrid learning and finally supported the transition back to full time, in-person learning. Hadiyah helped the school establish safety measures that have successfully prevented outbreaks.

Mary Sue Wilson (New Castle County)

- A volunteer with the Therapeutic Riding and Ongoing Training program at Carousel Park, Mary Sue Wilson works with children and adults living with disabilities and helps them to receive the benefits of therapeutic riding. Mary Sue has developed a connection with every student and works closely to ensure that they receive the maximum benefits of the program. When needed, Mary Sue also steps in to assist with special events and ensures that the program continues to grow and support as many individuals as possible.

Danette Butler (New Castle County)

- After losing her son to an overdose in 2010, Mrs. Butler turned her pain into purpose by working with inmates to find resources for addiction programs. Working with counselors, probation officers and other agencies, Mrs. Butler eventually started an organization called Parents with Incarcerated Children (PWIC). She is also the founder of the Pardon ME project to help meet the needs of ex-offenders to remain in recovery and out of trouble, find jobs and pursue expungement or pardon where possible. To date, she has helped more than

350 people through her work within the prison system.

Joan Flaherty (Sussex County)

- Joan Flaherty serves as a volunteer member of the Rehoboth Beach Tree Committee, which is an advisory committee making recommendations to the elected Mayor and Commissioners. Joan volunteers her time to weed and water trees on municipal property once a week and advocates for native, not invasive, trees, to be planted. Joan is also a key fundraiser, taking names to the engraver for golden leaves that are posted on an artistic tree on the walk at City Hall. The leaves are engraved with the names of donors and their favorite sayings about trees. Joan and other volunteers have worked with the DE Center for Inland Bays to plant hundreds of new trees, and to come back later to check on them, straightening the new trees that might be knocked sideways. Joan has also worked with the center on turtle monitoring and nest building.

Stephanie Sue DiMartine (New Castle County)

- Stephanie DiMartine is an active volunteer with Special Olympics of Delaware. Athletes with Special Olympics who have never played a sport that Stephanie coaches are rewarded with encouragement and confidence in their ability to perform in competitions and highlight their new skills. She always remembers names and creates fun at practices year-round with three different sports. The Pole-R Express Plunge Team she runs broke fundraising records last year by raising \$46,000. Stephanie not only volunteers for Special Olympics, she also is the president of the Northern Delaware USBC Bowling association, serving as a volunteer with their board in the community and helping bowlers and their families in need.

Kelly Paustian (New Castle County)

- In 2021, Kelly Paustian was instrumental in helping develop and implement Dine More 24, a new aspect of the statewide giving day event, Do More 24 Delaware. The Do More 24 Delaware giving day event raised nearly \$2 million over 24 hours in March 2021 for more than 400 nonprofits serving Delaware. The

Dine More initiative was an innovative way to take advantage of the pandemic economy while simultaneously helping to drive business to participating restaurants and support nonprofits participating in the giving day event. Kelly's work brought together two very different but important industries within our state during a critical time. The \$6,000 Kelly helped raise through the Dine More 24 initiative and was awarded through the Do More 24 Delaware giving day campaign generated nearly \$185,000 in donations (a 30x return) and motivated hundreds of Delaware nonprofits to activate their supporters and new donors from around the state and world.

Sharyn Fagone (New Castle County)

- Sharyn Fagone has been a volunteer with Tri-State Bird Rescue & Research since February 2007 and averages more than 350 hours a year in service. Sharyn provides supportive care to bird patients, enriches their enclosures with natural habitat, and serves as a transporter. Sharyn responds to calls for help in both Kent and New Castle counties, giving injured birds a ride to Tri-State's clinic in Newark for needed treatment and care. When necessary, Sharyn also works with Sussex County transporters to meet mid-state, sometimes on a moment's notice, to transport injured birds. Sharyn is vital in the work of Tri State Bird Rescue's work to provide care for injured birds.

Raymond Bryant (Sussex County)

- Raymond Bryant divides his considerable volunteer time between two organizations he cares for deeply. After finding an injured Turkey Vulture and working with volunteers at Tri-State Bird Rescue & Research, Ray saw an opportunity to help care for birds and began volunteering himself. Ray serves as a transporter and a member of the re-nesting team. Ray also serves as the Community Liaison on the board of the Harry K Foundation, an organization dedicated to the defeat of childhood hunger. Ray uses his connections and his organizational skills to plan events and work to distribute

food boxes to families in need.

Monica Lea (Sussex County)

- Monica Lea has extensive experience in service, particularly in the area of disaster relief. When a need arose for a statewide cadre of individuals who were able to respond to disasters quickly, Monica agreed to take the lead and create the program. Starting from scratch, Monica quickly created the structure to onboard and engage volunteers, as well as the processes to be able to deploy those volunteers quickly in support to disaster organizations. When Hurricane Ida ravaged a portion of Wilmington, the program Monica helped build was tested for the first time and volunteers were able to respond in less than 24 hours to support as needed. Monica's expertise in both disaster response and volunteer management were crucial in developing this program.

Lawrence Jackson (New Castle County)

- Lawrence Jackson is heavily involved in supporting community organizations across the West Side of Wilmington, including volunteering for West Side Grows Together. He is the first call when they need help on Fourth Street and the first one to offer help. Each morning, for the past 12 months (and prior), he goes out with a trash picker and a bucket to pick up trash around the neighborhood. He helps prep for community events by having tables, chairs and supplies ready to go, and he immediately notices when something needs attention from the City of Wilmington or other groups, such as when the fence was broken at the Fourth & Rodney playground. Lawrence Jackson provides critical on-the-ground feedback and support to community organizations along Fourth Street, in addition to being the full-time unpaid "caretaker" of the corridor.

Gary Focht (Sussex County)

- Sometimes it is difficult to believe that Gary Focht is retired. Using skills gleaned from his career as a parks administrator, Gary dedicates himself to maintaining the Woodbridge High School Cross Country trail, creating new and

maintaining current trails at the Millstone tract and Chapel Branch tract for the Nanticoke River Watershed Conservancy, and working with the Woodbridge Cross Country team as a volunteer coach. Skilled volunteers like Gary are vital to the work of nonprofits like the NRW because they are able to jump in and perform work with a level of expertise in the area where they are serving. Gary's knowledge of trail and tree maintenance enables the conservancy to share beautiful natural spaces with the public.

Noa Abigail Mills (New Castle County)

- Noa Mills is the founder of ReThink Edu, a nonprofit organization with a focus on providing innovative and modernization to educational techniques as well as providing educational resources on a multitude of levels throughout the state. Noa has partnered with DelDOT to establish and create a community service cleanup program that provides community service hours to students across the state in their respective academic groups. She also has created and distributed an annual Noa A. Mills scholarship from her organization. In addition, she is currently working with state leaders, Senator Nicole Poore and more to rewrite state regulation 615, shifting it to make it mandatory for schools statewide to provide mental health resources to students who are absent due to mental health issues.

Lynne Robinson (New Castle County)

- More than 16 years ago, Lynne Robinson founded PAWS for People with a goal to provide pet therapy visits to individuals in need throughout Delaware. As the organization grew, Lynne continued to volunteer alongside her own dogs. Lynne's golden retriever Boo Radley was there with her from the start and, although Boo has since passed on, Lynne's dedication to pet therapy has pushed her forward alongside her new friends

Volunteer Group

Bank of America Community Volunteers

- Bank of America volunteers participate in more than 100,000 hours of service each year to provide critical financial education to people of all ages, beginning with K-12 economic and personal finance education and continuing through adulthood with the Better Money Habits support, an online educational tool for individuals helping with family finances and providing tools for entrepreneurship. Bank of America Community Volunteers have helped the University of Delaware Center for Economic Education and Entrepreneurship (CEEE) reach thousands of Delaware kindergarten through 12th grade students and UD freshman in providing quality personal finance education. This successful partnership – now more than a decade old – has galvanized, influenced, and created a movement in financial and economic education, laying the groundwork for empowering more than 15,000 students statewide, over the course of this partnership, and helping beneficiaries to make better and sound financial choices.

Baptist Convention of Maryland and Delaware

- Ellen Udovich and her team from the Baptist Convention of Maryland and Delaware work in disaster response and recovery, primarily focusing on helping those in special populations or in high SVI areas recovering from disaster. They do this through muck-outs (cleaning out flood waters from homes), debris removal (removing flood-damaged items from homes or clearing damaged and dangerous trees/vegetative debris) and mold remediation. This is often the first step toward making a home habitable again and the first step in a disaster survivor's path to recovery.

Maynard and Eleanor Gregory

- Husband and wife team Maynard and Eleanor Gregory work with patients at the Bayhealth Inpatient Rehabilitation facility. While they look forward to a day when they can safely return to their in-person volunteer duties, they're making the

biggest impact they can despite the pandemic limitations. Eleanor recycles blue surgical wrap and has made scarves, PPE, walker bags and more out of the clean material that was once discarded. The couple also has shifted the way they interact with patients because of COVID-19. Although they aren't currently able to come to the Bayhealth Sussex Campus to be with patients, they send each of them a handwritten note and interact with patients virtually.

James and Dianna Hickey

- Jim and Dianna Hickey provide a reliable, knowledgeable and loving set of extra hands to help care for animals at the Brandywine Valley SPCA facility in Georgetown. When they are in need, Jim and his wife Dianna will personally donate whatever the shelter cats and dogs may need to make their stays comfortable and safe. These dedicated volunteers go above and beyond at both Sussex County shelter locations, volunteering almost nine hours a day, five days a week, and never hesitating to do what needs to be done for the dogs and cats at the shelter.

Elder Podwys, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

- This group of dedicated volunteers joined the New Castle County Parks in August 2020 with one aim: to serve. The COVID-19 pandemic had limited their members in-person missionary work, so they and their coordinator were eager to provide service and value to community. Since then, the group has served more than 1,900 hours, never refusing a task and demonstrating the strongest of work ethics. Even as temperatures hit triple digits, this group worked to remove invasive plants, weed, beautify grounds and trails, cleanup storm damage and pick up trash. Their work at the beautification and maintenance of Delaware's state parks and natural resources, which are a vital part of our communities for both residents and visitors, as well as cleanup of parks, trails, and other resources, especially after, for example, the flooding that resulted from Ida's storms in our area.

The Harris Family

- The Harris family saw a need for a community center in Bridgeville and took action to make that happen. As the founders of the Cornerstone Community Center, Darryn and Latoya, along with their young daughters, work to make sure that the needs of people in the Bridgeville area are met. The Harrises collect items for individuals experiencing homelessness, support the local senior center, hold events to promote community and support individuals, promote mental health awareness and services, and recently held a backpack giveaway as kids were going back to school. As a result of Darryn, Latoya and their family, there is an increased sense of community in Bridgeville and increased access to needed resources. This family has made volunteerism a family endeavor, involving even their young daughters in meaningful service.

Garden Stewards

- The 37-acre Delaware Botanic Gardens at Pepper Creek (DBG) first opened to the public in late 2019. These gardens were created, built, and maintained through the efforts of community volunteers. With only four paid staff, the volunteer Garden Stewards show up regardless of the weather to support and maintain the five gardens at the DBG facility. Through their efforts, the community has access to a beautiful place for enjoying nature and learning about native plant species.

Joshua M. Freeman Volunteer Corps

- The 261 volunteers of the Joshua M. Freeman Volunteer Corps have touched a tremendous number of mid-Atlantic residents and seasonal visitors through their mission to advance arts access for all through performance, education and advocacy. This year alone, more than 98,000 people have experienced the arts, thanks to the efforts of our staff and volunteers. This number includes more than 34,000 children who were impacted by their arts in education efforts. The tireless efforts of this group, under often demanding deadlines, is a testament to their

commitment to service and to sharing the impact of the arts with the community.

Junior League of Wilmington

- The Junior League of Wilmington, through its initiative Stand Up. Period., is committed to raising awareness of period equity in Wilmington and working toward ensuring individuals have affordable programs that provide period supplies. Period equity refers to removing the barriers that prevent people, particularly those living in poverty, from being able to manage their menstrual cycles and participate fully in their lives. Those who lack adequate period supplies experience school and work absences, opportunity losses, and emotional distress. And while they are suffering, societal stigmas often preclude open discussions about period equity. These dedicated volunteers are tackling a topic that is still considered taboo in many ways. By talking about menstruation and period equity, they are breaking down stigmas and bringing dignity back to a natural part of life.

Lions of District 22

- Members of the Lions of District 22 serve statewide, with over 1,200 members, 36 clubs and 9 Leo (Youth) clubs. This past summer, this group came together to help 200 displaced families in Wilmington due to flooding. Clubs also routinely provide glasses, ramps, food, shelter, mentoring to youth, road clean-up, funds to local libraries, funds to local youth groups such as little league and scouts, scholarships for college, collection of glasses for recycling, collection of plastic for recycling and using those funds for park benches, help with Special Olympics, provide guide dogs for people who are blind, provide low-vision equipment to those in need, provide computer equipment to students who need them, and many other projects to meet needs that they see in the community. It is estimated that these dedicated volunteers have contributed more than 15,000 hours in Delaware in just the past year.

Miss Delaware Scholarship Organization

- The Miss Delaware Scholarship Organization is a part of the Miss America Organization and is one of the largest providers of scholarships, exclusively to young women, in the world. At the state and local level, volunteers support programming designed to empower young women to be their personal best, serve within their communities, and earn college scholarships. The board of the Miss Delaware organization is made up entirely of volunteers who manage every aspect of the program from competition organization, recruitment and event logistics to development and service activities. Through the work of the Miss Delaware board, hundreds of thousands of dollars in scholarships have been awarded to young women in Delaware and thousands of young women have been able to participate in skill building, service activities and personal development programming offered.

Rick and Cecilia Stafford

- Rick and Cecilia Stafford work closely with the Nanticoke Senior Center and Code Purple to help support individuals who are experiencing homelessness and food insecurity. Rick spends many Thursday nights at the Code Purple shelters to provide overnight volunteer support and Cecilia provides meals to the residents. They also help with meal delivery for seniors who are vulnerable and support the Christmas Chicken delivery. They also work to build awareness of muscular dystrophy through various events where they ride their motorcycle. Rick and Cecilia are unique because of the way that they have made volunteering a part of their lives. As a couple, they are constantly looking for ways that they can help, and they have made a memorable impact on so many seniors and individuals experiencing homelessness in Sussex County.

Wilmington Friends Garden

- Every year for the past several years, the Wilmington Friends Garden has provided over 500 pounds of produce to various food banks (primarily Lutheran Services and the Sunday

Breakfast Mission). The produce is grown and harvested by Wilmington Friends School staff, students and parents. The Wilmington Friends Garden is special because it creates a learning and service environment for students and families while giving back to the community. Each week during harvest season, the food grown in the garden is collected and donated to the Lutheran Services Food Bank or other food banks in the community to help individuals struggling with access to healthy/fresh food. The garden operates from spring through fall, with various plants in rotation to maximize the growing and harvesting seasons.